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Fungus of the Month - June 2009



Clavaria miniata - flame fungus

The flame fungus, *Clavaria miniata*, belongs to a group of fungi commonly referred to as coral fungi. It is found throughout southern Australian eucalypt forests and woodlands and fruits on the ground amongst litter in early to late autumn. The simple club-shaped fruit bodies are orange-red to red in colour, grow up to 80 mm tall and may be flattened or grooved. They are generally found in clusters but may be solitary. A smaller, uncommon, red-pink species, *Clavaria corallinorosacea* (inset), is similar, but is much smaller in stature (up to 30 mm tall) with cylindrical fruit bodies that have a distinct boundary between the stem and the fertile upper portion of the club.

The Latin name describes the shape and colour of the fruit body: *Clav*:- club, *-aria*: pertaining to or possessing, *miniat*:- painted with red lead.